

Figs. 3 and 4 illustrate the activity detection process that evaluates the user activity indicating events, and Fig. 5 illustrates the interrogator process that provides an interface to a requesting user and formulates appropriate queries to be sent to one or more activity detection processes. Thus, the interrogator process sends queries to the activity detection processes and not to the groups whose activity is being detected.

At C5/L66-C6/L38, Johnson discloses all the methods for detecting user activity such as detecting movements of track balls, mouse, telephones taken on and off hooks, activities of printers, scanners, multimedia I/O devices, etc. All of these detections are performed automatically based on sensors and not based on any inquiries to the groups themselves. The activities are compiled into a user activity event table and stored in an activity detection database. It is this table of activities to which the interrogator process formulates queries.

For example, at C7/L8-44, Johnson discloses various confirmations of a time period in a query and whether the activity detection database has logged user activity within the requested time period. Thus, the term "user queries" used in Johnson does not mean sending inquiries to users, but rather interrogating the user activity event table that performs detection of user activities using sensors. The only portion where queries involving a user is disclosed at C9/L36-46. Here, a requesting user desires to detect the activity of other users and the requesting user sends a query to the interrogator to discover the activities of a particular user, a group, or a physical area. Johnson discloses "For example, the query may ask what is John Doe doing, or what is John Doe's department doing, or what are the individuals in John Doe's building doing." C9/L43-46.

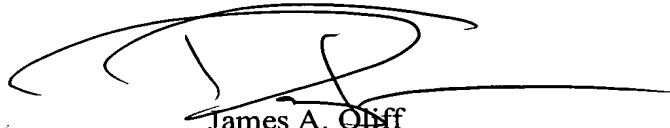
In view of the above, Johnson does not disclose or suggest an inquiry unit configured to direct inquiries to the groups concerning activities performed by the groups, as recited in claims 1, 6 and 11. Thus, Masamichi and Johnson, individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1, 6 and 11 and claims 2-5, 7-10 and

12-15 that depend from claims 1, 6 and 11, respectively. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully solicited.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff  
Registration No. 27,075

Paul Tsou  
Registration No. 37,956

JAO:PXT/eks

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**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC**  
**P.O. Box 320850**  
**Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850**  
**Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

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